### 109TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION

## H. R. 3657

To regulate international marriage broker activity in the United States, to provide for certain protections for individuals who utilize the services of international marriage brokers, and for other purposes.

### IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**SEPTEMBER 6, 2005** 

Mr. Larsen of Washington (for himself and Mr. Wolf) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

### A BILL

To regulate international marriage broker activity in the United States, to provide for certain protections for individuals who utilize the services of international marriage brokers, and for other purposes.

- 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
- 2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
- 3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; FINDINGS; TABLE OF CONTENTS.
- 4 (a) Short Title.—This Act may be cited as the
- 5 "International Marriage Broker Regulation Act of 2005".
- 6 (b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:
- 7 (1) There is a substantial international mar-
- 8 riage broker business worldwide. A 1999 report by

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the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) estimated that there were at least 200 such companies operating in the United States, and that as many as 4,000 to 6,000 individuals in the United States, almost all male, found foreign spouses through for-profit international marriage brokers each year. The international marriage broker business has grown significantly in recent years, greatly facilitated by the Internet. Studies now suggest that 500 such companies operate in the United States. In addition, the total number of foreign fiancé(e)s entering the United States each year more than doubled between 1998 and 2002. It is currently estimated, then, that at least 8,000 to 12,000 individuals in the United States find foreign spouses through for-profit international marriage brokers each year.

(2) The 1999 INS report notes that "The pervasiveness of domestic violence in our society has already been documented, and with the burgeoning number of unregulated international matchmaking organizations and clients using their services, the potential for abuse in mail-order marriages is considerable." The author of the study commissioned for the 1999 INS report noted further that American men

- who use the services of an international marriage broker tend to seek relationships with women whom they feel they can control.
  - (3) The dangers posed to foreign women who meet their American husbands through international marriage brokers are underscored by the growing number of cases across the United States of foreign women who have been abused or killed by those men. Two highly publicized examples are the murders in Washington State of Susanna Remunerata Blackwell of the Philippines and Anastasia Solovieva King of Kyrgyzstan. In addition, a 2003 survey of programs providing legal services to battered immigrant women across the country found that over 50 percent of these programs had served immigrant women clients battered by American men they met through international marriage brokers.
    - (4) 30.4 percent of all women in the United States are physically abused by their husbands or male-cohabitants at some point in their lives. 49.3 percent of immigrants reported physical abuse by an intimate partner during their lifetimes with 42.1 percent reporting severe physical or sexual abuse. Among immigrants who were married or formerly married the lifetime abuse rate raises as high as

1 59.5 percent. 72.3 percent of abusive United States 2 citizen or lawful resident spouses never file immigra-3 tion papers for their abused spouses and the 27.7 percent who eventually do file wait approximately 5 four years to do so. In 1994 Congress included im-6 migration protections in the Violence Against 7 Women Act ("VAWA") to remove the ability of abusive United States citizens and lawful permanent 8 9 residents to fully control their alien spouse's ability 10 to gain legal immigration status. By removing the 11 threat of automatic deportation, VAWA aims to en-12 able battered immigrants to take actions to protect 13 themselves and their children, such as filing for a 14 civil protection order, filing criminal charges, or call-15 ing the police.

- (5) Aliens seeking to enter the United States to marry citizens of the United States currently lack the ability to access and fully verify personal history information about their prospective American spouses.
- (6) Many individuals entering the United States on K nonimmigrant visas to marry citizens of the United States are unaware of United States laws regarding—

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1	(A) domestic violence, including protections
2	for immigrant victims of domestic violence, sex-
3	ual assault, and stalking;
4	(B) prohibitions on involuntary servitude;
5	(C) protections from automatic deporta-
6	tion; and
7	(D) the role of police and the courts in
8	providing assistance to victims of domestic vio-
9	lence and other crimes.
10	(c) Table of Contents.—The table of contents of
11	this Act is as follows:
	<ul> <li>Sec. 1. Short title; findings; table of contents.</li> <li>Sec. 2. Regulation of international marriage brokers.</li> <li>Sec. 3. Information about legal rights and resources for immigrant victims of domestic violence.</li> <li>Sec. 4. Changes in processing K nonimmigrant visas; consular confidentiality.</li> <li>Sec. 5. Study and report.</li> <li>Sec. 6. Effective date.</li> </ul>
12	SEC. 2. REGULATION OF INTERNATIONAL MARRIAGE BRO-
13	KERS.
14	(a) Prohibition on Marketing Children.—An
15	international marriage broker shall not provide any United
16	States client or other person with the personal contact in-
17	formation, photograph, or general information about the
18	background or interests of any individual under the age
19	of 18.
20	(b) Obligation of International Marriage
21	Broker With Respect to Informed Consent.—

1	(1) Limitation on sharing information
2	ABOUT FOREIGN NATIONAL CLIENTS.—An inter-
3	national marriage broker shall not provide any
4	United States client or other person with the per-
5	sonal contact information of any foreign national cli-
6	ent or other individual 18 years of age or older un-
7	less and until the international marriage broken
8	has—
9	(A) collected certain background informa-
10	tion from the United States client or other per-
11	son to whom the personal contact information
12	would be provided, as specified in subsection
13	(c);
14	(B) provided a copy of that background in-
15	formation to the foreign national client or other
16	individual in the primary language of that client
17	or individual;
18	(C) provided to the foreign national client
19	or other individual in such primary language
20	certain information about legal rights and re-
21	sources available to immigrant victims of do-
22	mestic violence and other crimes in the United
23	States, developed under section 3;
24	(D) received from the foreign national cli-

ent or other individual in such primary lan-

- guage a signed, written consent to release such personal contact information to the specific United States client or other person to whom the personal contact information would be provided; and
  - (E) informed the United States client or other person from whom background information has been collected that, after filing a petition for a K nonimmigrant visa, the United States client or other person will be subject to a criminal background check.
  - (2) Confidentiality.—In fulfilling its obligations under this subsection, an international marriage broker shall not disclose the name or locational information of individuals who were granted a restraining or protection order as described in subparagraph (A) of subsection (c)(2), or of any other victims of crimes as described in subparagraphs (B) through (D) of such subsection, but shall disclose the relationship of the United States client or other person to such individuals or victims.
- 22 (c) Obligations of International Marriage 23 Broker With Respect to Mandatory Collection 24 of Information.—

- broker shall collect the background information listed in paragraph (2) from each United States client or other person to whom the personal contact information of a foreign national client or any other individual would be provided. The background information must be in writing and signed (which may be in electronic form, such as an electronic signature) by the United States client or other person to whom the personal contact information of a foreign national client or any other individual would be provided.
  - (2) Background information.—The background information required to be collected with respect to a United States client or other person under paragraph (1) includes information about each of the following:
    - (A) Any court order restricting the client's or person's physical or other contact with, behavior towards, or communication with another person, including any temporary or permanent civil restraining order or protection order.
    - (B) Any arrest or conviction of the client or person for homicide, murder, manslaughter, assault, battery, domestic violence, rape, sexual

assault, abusive sexual contact, sexual exploitation, incest, child abuse or neglect, torture, trafficking, peonage, holding hostage, involuntary servitude, slave trade, kidnapping, abduction, unlawful criminal restraint, false imprisonment, stalking, or any similar activity in violation of Federal, State, or local criminal law.

- (C) Any arrest or conviction of the client or person for solely, principally, or incidentally engaging in prostitution; or for any direct or indirect attempts to procure prostitutes or persons for the purpose of prostitution; or any receiving, in whole or in part, of the proceeds of prostitution.
- (D) Any arrest or conviction of the client or person for offenses related to controlled substances or alcohol.
- (E) Marital history of the client or person, including if the client or individual is currently married, if the client or person has previously been married and how many times, how previous marriages of the client or person were terminated and the date of termination, and if the client or person has previously sponsored an

1	alien to whom the client or person was engaged
2	or married.
3	(F) The ages of any of the client's or per-
4	son's children under the age of 18.
5	(G) All States in which the client or person
6	has resided since the age of 18.
7	(d) Penalties.—
8	(1) Federal civil penalty.—
9	(A) VIOLATION.—An international mar-
10	riage broker that violates subsection (a), (b), or
11	(c) is subject to a civil penalty of not less than
12	\$20,000 for each such violation.
13	(B) Procedures for imposition of
14	PENALTY.—A penalty may be imposed under
15	paragraph (A) by the Secretary of Homeland
16	Security only after notice and an opportunity
17	for an agency hearing on the record in accord-
18	ance with subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5,
19	United States Code.
20	(2) Federal Criminal Penalty.—An inter-
21	national marriage broker that, within the special
22	maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United
23	States, violates subsection (a), (b), or (c) shall be
24	fined in accordance with title 18, United States

1	Code, or imprisoned for not less than 1 year and not
2	more than 5 years, or both.
3	(3) State enforcement.—In any case in
4	which the Attorney General of a State has reason to
5	believe that an interest of the residents of that State
6	has been, or is threatened to be, adversely affected
7	by a violation by an international marriage broker of
8	subsection (a), (b), or (c), the State, as parens
9	patriae, may bring a civil action on behalf of the
10	residents of the State in a district court of the
11	United States with appropriate jurisdiction to—
12	(A) enjoin that practice;
13	(B) enforce compliance with this section
14	or
15	(C) obtain damages.
16	(4) Additional remedies.—The penalties and
17	remedies under this subsection are in addition to
18	any other penalties or remedies available under law
19	(e) Nonpreemption.—Nothing in this section shall
20	preempt—
21	(1) any State law that provides additional pro-
22	tections for aliens who are utilizing the services of
23	an international marriage broker or other inter-
24	national matchmaking organization; or

1	(2) any other or further right or remedy avail-
2	able under law to any party utilizing the services of
3	an international marriage broker or other inter-
4	national matchmaking organization.
5	(f) Definitions.—For purposes of this Act:
6	(1) United states client.—The term
7	"United States client" means a United States cit-
8	izen or other individual who resides in the United
9	States and who makes a payment or incurs a debt
10	in order to utilize the services of an international
11	marriage broker.
12	(2) Crime of violence.—The term "crime of
13	violence" has the meaning given such term in section
14	16 of title 18, United States Code.
15	(3) Domestic violence.—The term "domestic
16	violence" means any crime of violence, or other act
17	forming the basis for past or outstanding protective
18	orders, restraining orders, no-contact orders, convic-
19	tions, arrests, or police reports, committed against a
20	person by—
21	(A) a current or former spouse of the per-
22	son;
23	(B) an individual with whom the person

shares a child in common;

- 1 (C) an individual who is cohabiting with or 2 has cohabited with the person;
  - (D) an individual similarly situated to a spouse of the person under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction where the offense occurs; or
  - (E) any other individual if the person is protected from that individual's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the United States or any State, Indian tribal government, or unit of local government.
  - (4) K NONIMMIGRANT VISA.—The term "K nonimmigrant visa" means a nonimmigrant visa under clause (i) or (ii) of section 101(a)(15)(K) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(K)).
  - (5) Foreign national client" means a person who is not a United States citizen or national or an alien lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence and who utilizes the services of an international marriage broker, and includes an alien residing in the United States who is in the United States as a result of utilizing the services of an international marriage broker.

# 1 (6) International marriage broker.— 2 (A) In general.—The term "i

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term "international marriage broker" means a corporation, partnership, business, individual, or other legal entity, whether or not organized under any law of the United States, that charges fees for providing dating, matrimonial, matching services, or social referrals between United States citizens or nationals or aliens lawfully admitted to the United States as permanent residents and foreign national clients by providing personal contact information or otherwise facilitating communication between individuals.

- (B) Exceptions.—Such term does not include—
  - (i) a traditional matchmaking organization of a cultural or religious nature that operates on a nonprofit basis and otherwise operates in compliance with the laws of the countries in which it operates, including the laws of the United States; or
  - (ii) an entity that provides dating services between United States citizens or residents and other individuals who may be aliens, but does not do so as its principal

1	business, and charges comparable rates to
2	all individuals it serves regardless of the
3	gender or country of citizenship or resi-
4	dence of the individual.
5	(7) Personal contact information.—
6	(A) IN GENERAL.—The term "personal
7	contact information" means information or a
8	forum that would permit individuals to contact
9	each other and includes—
10	(i) the name, telephone number, post-
11	al address, electronic mail address, or voice
12	message mailbox of an individual; or
13	(ii) the provision of an opportunity for
14	an in-person meeting.
15	(B) Exception.—Such term does not in-
16	clude a photograph or general information
17	about the background or interests of a person
18	(8) STATE.—The term "State" includes the
19	District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Is-
20	lands, Guam, and American Samoa.
21	(g) Repeal of Mail-Order Bride Provision.—
22	Section 652 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immi-
23	grant Responsibility Act of 1996 (division C of Public Law
24	104–208; 8 U.S.C. 1375) is hereby repealed.

1	SEC. 3. INFORMATION ABOUT LEGAL RIGHTS AND RE-
2	SOURCES FOR IMMIGRANT VICTIMS OF DO-
3	MESTIC VIOLENCE.
4	(a) IN GENERAL.—The Department of State and the
5	Department of Homeland Security shall ensure the con-
6	sistency and accuracy of information disseminated—
7	(1) to foreign national clients or other individ-
8	uals by international marriage brokers pursuant to
9	section $2(b)(1)(C)$ ; and
10	(2) to beneficiaries of petitions filed by United
11	States citizens for K nonimmigrant visas.
12	Such departments shall develop the pamphlet working in
13	consultation with non-profit, non-governmental immigrant
14	victim advocacy organizations with expertise on the legal
15	rights of immigrant victims of battery, extreme cruelty,
16	sexual assault and other crimes.
17	(b) Information Pamphlet.—The information
18	pamphlet required to be developed under subsection (a)
19	shall include information on the following:
20	(1) The K nonimmigrant visa application proc-
21	ess and the marriage-based immigration process, in-
22	cluding conditional residence and adjustment of sta-
23	tus.
24	(2) The requirement that international mar-
25	riage brokers provide foreign national clients with
26	background information collected from United

- States clients regarding their marital history and domestic violence or other violent criminal history, but that such information may not be complete or accurate.
  - (3) The illegality of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse in the United States.
  - (4) Information on the dynamics of domestic violence.
  - (5) Domestic violence and sexual assault services in the United States, including the National Domestic Violence Hotline and the National Sexual Assault Hotline.
  - (6) Immigration relief available to immigrant victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking and other crimes under the Violence Against Women Act, section 101(a)(15)(U) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(U)), and section 101(a)(15)(T) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(T)).
  - (7) The legal rights of immigrant victims of abuse and other crimes in immigration, criminal justice, family law and other matters.
- 23 (8) The obligations of parents to provide child 24 support for children.

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1 (9) Notice that knowingly entering into mar-2 riage for the purpose of evading the immigration 3 laws of the United States constitutes the crime of 4 marriage fraud and carries serious penalties.

### (c) Translation.—

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- (1) In General.—In order to best serve the language groups most recruited by international marriage brokers and having the greatest concentration of K nonimmigrant visa applicants, the information pamphlet under this section shall, subject to paragraph (2), be translated by the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security into the following languages: Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Chinese, Ukrainian, Thai, Korean, Polish, Japanese, French, Arabic, Portuguese, and Hindi.
- 17 (2) REVISION.—The specific languages to which 18 the information pamphlet is translated are subject to 19 change as a result of the report made under section 20 8.
- 21 (d) AVAILABILITY AND DISTRIBUTION.—The infor-22 mation pamphlet under this subsection shall be made 23 available and distributed as follows:
- 24 (1) To international marriage brokers 25 and victim advocacy organizations.—It shall be

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made available to any international marriage broker and to any governmental and non-governmental victim advocacy organization.

(2) To K nonimmigrant visa applicants; POSTING ON NVC WEBSITE.—It shall be mailed by the National Visa Center to each applicant for a K nonimmigrant visa at the same time that Form DS-3032 is mailed to such applicant. The pamphlet so mailed shall be in the primary language of the applicant, or in English if no translation into the applicant's primary language is available. The pamphlet shall also be posted on the National Visa Center website as well as on the websites of all consular posts processing K nonimmigrant visa applications. In addition, the pamphlet shall be distributed directly to such applicants at all consular interviews for K nonimmigrant visas. If no written translation into the applicant's primary language is available, the consular officer conducting the visa interview shall review the pamphlet with the applicant orally in the applicant's primary language, in addition to distributing the pamphlet to the applicant in English.

### SEC. 4. CHANGES IN PROCESSING K NONIMMIGRANT VISAS; 2 CONSULAR CONFIDENTIALITY. 3 (a) K Nonimmigrant Visa Processing.—Section 214(d) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 4 5 1184(d)) is amended— 6 (1) by striking "Attorney General" and insert-7 ing "Secretary of Homeland Security" each place it 8 appears; (2) by inserting "(1)" before "A visa"; and 9 10 (3) by adding at the end the following: 11 "(2) A United States citizen may not file a petition under paragraph (1) if there is such a petition filed by 13 that petitioner for another alien fiancé(e) that is pending or that has been approved and is still valid. 15 "(3) The Department of Homeland Security shall provide to the Department of State criminal background information on the petitioner for a visa under clause (i) 17 or (ii) of section 101(a)(15)(K) to which it has access 18 19 under existing authority in the course of adjudicating the 20 petition. 21 "(4) Each petitioner for a visa under clause (i) or 22 (ii) of section 101(a)(15)(K) shall provide, as part of the petition and in writing and signed under penalty of perjury, information described in section 2(c)(2) of the Inter-

national Marriage Broker Regulation Act of 2005.

"(5) The Secretary of State shall provide that an ap-1 2 plicant for a visa under clause (i) or (ii) of section 101(a)(15)(K)— 3 "(A) shall be provided, by mail— 4 "(i) a copy of the petition for such visa 5 6 submitted by the United States citizen peti-7 tioner; and 8 "(ii) any information that is contained in 9 the background check described in paragraph 10 (3) relating to any court orders, arrests, or con-11 victions described in subparagraphs (A) through 12 (D) of section 2(c)(2) of the International Mar-13 riage Broker Regulation Act of 2005; 14 "(B) shall be informed that petitioner informa-15 tion described in subparagraph (A) is based on avail-16 able records and may not be complete; and 17 "(C) shall be asked in the primary language of 18 the visa applicant whether an international marriage 19 broker has facilitated the relationship between the 20 visa applicant and the United States petitioner and 21 whether that international marriage broker complied 22 with the requirements of section 2 of such Act. 23 The Secretary also shall provide for the disclosure of such information to the visa applicant at the consular interview in the primary language of the visa applicant.

- 1 "(6) The fact that an alien described in clause (i)
- 2 or (ii) of section 101(a)(15)(K) is aware of any informa-
- 3 tion disclosed under paragraph (5) shall not be used
- 4 against the alien in any determination of eligibility for re-
- 5 lief under this Act or the Violence Against Women Act.
- 6 "(7) In fulfilling the requirements of paragraph
- 7 (5)(A)(ii), a consular officer shall not disclose the name
- 8 or locational information of any person who was granted
- 9 a restraining or protective order against the petitioner, but
- 10 shall disclose the relationship of the person to the peti-
- 11 tioner.".
- 12 (b) Sharing of Certain Information.—Section
- 13 222(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.
- 14 1202(f)) shall not be construed to prevent the sharing of
- 15 information under section 214(d) of such Act (8 U.S.C.
- 16 1184(d)).
- 17 (c) Effective Date.—The amendment made by
- 18 subsection (a) shall apply to petitions filed after the date
- 19 of the enactment of this Act.
- 20 SEC. 5. STUDY AND REPORT.
- 21 (a) STUDY.—The Secretary of Homeland Security,
- 22 through the Director of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigra-
- 23 tion Services, shall conduct a study—
- 24 (1) regarding the number of international mar-
- 25 riage brokers doing business in the United States

- and the number of marriages resulting from the services provided, and the extent of compliance with the applicable requirements of this Act;
  - (2) that assesses information gathered under this Act from clients and petitioners by international marriage brokers and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services;
  - (3) that examines, based on the information gathered, the extent to which persons with a history of violence are using the services of international marriage brokers and the extent to which such persons are providing accurate information to international marriage brokers in accordance with section 2;
    - (4) that assesses the accuracy of the criminal background check at identifying past instances of domestic violence; and
    - (5) that assesses the extent to which the languages of translation required under section 3(c)(1) continue to accurately reflect the highest markets for recruitment by international marriage brokers and the greatest concentrations of K nonimmigrant visa applicants.
- 24 (b) Report.—Not later than 3 years after the date 25 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit

- 1 a report to the Committees on the Judiciary of the Senate
- 2 and the House of Representatives setting forth the results
- 3 of the study conducted under subsection (a).

### 4 SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

- 5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection
- 6 (b), section 2 and the amendments made by section 4 shall
- 7 take effect on the date that is 60 days after the date of
- 8 the enactment of this Act.
- 9 (b) Additional Time Allowed for Information
- 10 Pamphlet.—The requirement of sections 2(b)(1)(C), and
- 11 section 3 insofar as it relates to such requirement, shall
- 12 first take effect on the date that is 120 days after the
- 13 date of the enactment of this Act.

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